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CIA NEEDS A WATCHDOG (St. Paul Dispatch)

Recent exposes concerning the influence wielded by the central intelligence agency in the development and execution of U.S. foreign policy lends urgency to the campaign to set up a congressional watchdog committee on CIA activities.

Senator Eugene McCarthy's past failure to get action along this line is understandable in that the congress could not pin down the extent to which the secret agency influenced critical policy matters. But with the Cuban crisis the lid has come off the pot. It is found making foreign policy in some areas, directing military operations in others and influencing broader policy considerations from a parochial and unrepresentable position.

Some supervision is necessary to determine whether the CIA and similar agencies are taking action without constitutional justification, without authority of statute or of resolution or of treaty commitments.

The 1962 crisis in the Bay of Pigs demonstrated that the agency can't rely entirely on the executive branch to offset the agency's errors and miscalculations.

If nothing else a congressional watchdog group would be in a position to force the CIA to account for its activities. The first response to any new legislation is to first find out what it is doing it.